

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-07 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00
NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 PM-04 H-01
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FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2025

INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY DACCA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY COLOMBO PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU PRIORITY

AMCONSUL BOMBAY PRIORITY

AMCONSUL CALCUTTA PRIORITY

AMCONSUL MADRAS PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY

USLO PEKING PRIORITY

HMCONSUL HONG KONG PRIORITY 2313

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY

USCINCPAC PRIORITY

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

EO 11652: NA

TAGS: PINT, IN

SUBJ: PRESS AND OTHER REACTIONS TO ELECTION

1. INDIAN EXPRESS MAR 22 EDITORIALIZES ON "DEMOCRACY'S
FINEST HOUR", THE MATURITY OF THE INDIAN VOTER, AND
EMPHASIZES THE LESSON THAT NO FUTURE INDIAN GOVT CAN
ATTEMPT TO RUN ROUGHSHOD OVER THE CONSTITUTION, THE
LAWS, AND THE LIBERTIES OF THE PEOPLE AND HOPE TO
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"ESCAPE THE NEMESIS OF OUTRAGED PEOPLE". EDITORIAL
SAYS IT IS TO MRS GANDHI'S CREDIT THAT SHE CONDUCTED
ELECTION WITHOUT RESTRAINTS AND "THEREBY PERMITTED FREE
EXPRESSION OF WILL OF THE PEOPLE."

2. STATESMAN MAR 22 EDITORIALY DESCRIBES ELECTION AS
"REMARKABLE VERDICT" AND GRAT VINDICATION OF INDIAN

PEOPLE'S FAITH IN DEMOCRACY. "MRS GANDHI HAS RENDERED COUNTRY SOME SERVICE IN PAST" AND HER REVOCATION OF EMERGENCY AFTER ELECTION WAS AN "ACT OF GRACE". "ELECTORATE WHICH DID NOT FORTIVE MRS GANDHI'S MISTAKES WILL NOT TOLERATE JANATA AND CONGRESS FOR DEMOCRACY'S LEADERS "IF THEY QUARREL AMONGST THEMSELVES."

3. TIMES OF INDIA EDITORIAL CALLS THE ELECTION RESULT A "SECOND LIBERATION STRUGGLE" AND OBSERVES THAT A PALL OF FEAR HAD BEEN LIFTED AND THE PEOPLE COULD BREATHE IN FREEDOM AGAIN.

4. PRO-CPI PATRIOT CALLS THE ELECTION A "VOTE OF ANGER" AND ARGUES IT IS "UNFAIR AND CRUEL" TO REMEMBER MRS GANDHI ONLY IN TERMS OF THE EMERGENCY. IT HARKS BACK TO BANGLADESH, INDO-PAK WAR, NATIONALIZATION OF BANKS AND INSURANCE COMPANIES, AND CLOSE RELATIONS WITH SOVIET UNION AS HER MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS. EDITORIAL ATTRIBUTES ELECTION DEFEAT ULTIMATELY TO FACT THAT THE CONGRESS PARTY HAD BECOME "FLABBY".

5. PRO-CONGRESS "NATIONAL HERALD" EDITORIAL MOURNS THAT THE COUNTRY HAS BEEN DEPRIVED "FOR THE MOMENT" OF THE PM'S OUTSTANDING LEADERSHIP AND OBSERVES THAT PREJUDICE AND EMOTION IN NORTHERN INDIA WHICH WERE NOT PRESENT IN THE SOUTH HAD BEEN RESPONSIBLE FOR HER DEFEAT.

6. FEW CONGRESS LEADERS HAVE COMMENTED ON THE ELECTION. WEST BENGAL CHIEF MINISTER SSRAY IS QUOTED AS DESCRIBING LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THE PM'S DEFEAT AS A "DISASTER" BUT THAT "WE WILL ACCEPT THE VERDICT". DELHI CONGRESS PARTY LEADER (AND DEFEATED CANDIDATE) ANCHAWLA SHRUGGED OFF HIS DEFEAT OBSERVING THAT IN THE LAST ELECTION HE HAD DEFEATED HIS OPPONENT AND THIS TIME HE HAD LOST HIMSELF. HE ATTRIBUTED CONGRESS' POOR SHOWING IN DELHI TO STERILIZATION, DEMOLITION OF SQUATTERS HUTS, AND BUREAUCRATIC HIGH-HANDEDNESS AND INCOMPETENCE. MAHARASHTRA CHIEF MINISTER SBCHAVAN PROFESSED NOT TO UNDERSTAND WHY CONGRESS HAD DONE BADLY IN HIS STATE, BUT IS RUMORED IN THE PRESS TO BE PREPARING TO RESIGN. UP CHIEF MINISTER NDTIWARI IS ALSO REPORTED TO HAVE SAID HE PLANS TO RESIGN BECAUSE OF HIS BAD SHOWING IN HIS STATE (WE ALSO UNDERSTAND THAT CONGRESS HAS NOW LOST ITS MAJOITY IN THE UP LEGISLATURE).

7. SEVERAL SENIOR INDIAN OFFICIALS HAVE TOLD EMBOFFS THAT THEY ARE ELATED AT THE RESULTS OF THE ELECTION AND THAT THIS IS THE GENERAL ATTITUDE THEY HAVE FOUND AMONG

MOST OF THEIR COLLEAGUES. THE SOVIET MILITARY ATTACHE
TOLD DATT THAT THE SOVIET EMBASSY WAS "STUNNED" BY
THE ELECTION RESULTS AND HAD BEEN ABSOLUTELY CONFIDENT
THAT MRS GANDHI WOULD WIN A MAJORITY.
SCHNEIDER

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